

CALL OF THE WATCHMEN

October 2017

Send forth Your light and Your truth!

How often have we proclaimed this word of the Lord over our land – and that God has answered! At the German Prayer Conference in Berlin, from September 1st to 3rd, we experienced the revelation of God’s light and truth in a special way! This helped us to recognise the influence of the spirit of the age on our thinking and to be released from it. True repentance begins with a change in our thoughts (“metanoia” in Greek). The word of God is our guide and help: “We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.” (2 Corinthians 10:5). Let us continue to pray in faith for our land: “Send forth your light and your truth, let them guide me, let them bring me to your holy mountain, to the place where you dwell.” (Psalm 43:3). -RS-

Universities and centres of further education

In the coming months after the prayer conference we want to concentrate on how we can make a change in our way of thinking in our society. The Holy Spirit wants to bring about transformation in our society and culture. God wants to permeate our education system to break the power of ungodly ideologies and thought structures. Our thinking is always subject to the influence of the “spirit of the age”. Knowledge is never neutral and unbiased, but formed according to prevailing and generally accepted beliefs. Nowhere are the thoughts and actions within each generation so strongly moulded and influenced as within our universities and other centres of further education. Many of the 2.8 million students today will one day be our leaders and will in many ways influence all areas of social life: justice, business, philosophy, education, theology, literature and politics. For too long the thinking of the ‘68 movement has been influencing all of these areas. The Spirit of God wants to permeate the centres of thought formation in our land once again. In past centuries God has inspired many in our universities to take his kingdom into the world. God is the source of ideas and solutions to all questions in life. He has all the help and answers that our land so urgently needs. But we also need creative thinkers with a servant’s heart who together with the Holy Spirit can develop innovative ideas and influence thought within Germany for the good of our land. God is the one who gives people the gifts, talents and grace to be a blessing to the world. Germany has often been known as the “land of poets and thinkers” and is very open to new ways and ideas. May the Holy Spirit come into our universities and centres of education to renew our way of thinking and bring forth new life in our land.

Prayer:

- **For a transformation in the ways of thinking in our society in a move to draw us closer to God. (2 Corinthians 10:4-5)**
- **For a movement of the Holy Spirit in our universities and other centres of thought formation. (Acts 4:29-31)**

- **That creative thinkers will be inspired by the Holy Spirit to find answers and solutions for the needs of our land. (Daniel 1:7,20; Proverbs 3:5-6)** -AS-

Formation of a new federal government

The German Federal Parliament was elected four years ago on September 22nd, 2013, but the election of the federal chancellor did not take place until December 19th, 2013. There is no deadline for this election in the German constitution. Protracted considerations as to which parties should form a coalition and the difficulties in the negotiations towards a coalition agreement delayed the formation of a new government. This can definitely happen again if one believes the opinion polls. As this prayer letter was being written, the result of the new elections on September 24th was not yet known. Angela Merkel recently stated regarding the election: “Until Sunday evening I can still do something, then I am constrained to remain passive. Afterwards we just have to wait and see. It is like waiting for your school report card.” But what happens next? Many questions must be answered in Berlin: which parties are able to form a coalition? What positions (ministers, state secretaries...) does each party get? Who are standing for these positions, which political wings within the parties will be involved, which federal state interests must be considered? How many women should be included? Who will be vice-chancellor? All these decisions will determine the direction of our country for the next four years.

Prayer:

- **That God lifts up and brings down people during the process of forming a coalition and the new German federal government. (Luke 1:51-52)**
- **That trustworthy, visionary and God-fearing parliamentarians will fill the important positions in government (in the foreign ministry, for example). (Proverbs 8:15-17)**
- **For the coalition agreement; that the needs of our people and the role of our country with regard to Europe, Israel and the world will be Spirit-led and guide us into the future to the praise of God’s Name. (Romans 15:8-12)** -JB-

Family-related policies

Family-related policies in Germany have been subject to fundamental changes for some years as the meaning and roll of marriage, family and parenthood have been redefined without regard to traditional Biblical values. Marriage has lost its exclusive status as a covenant between a man and a woman by the introduction of “marriage for all”. The term “family” has already for a long time not been regarded as exclusively reserved for “a father, a mother and their child(ren)” in accordance with God’s order in creation. Parenthood was also redefined by the decision of the constitutional court (2013) to the effect that legal parenthood and fatherhood can also exist without a biological or traditional family relationship to the child. At

the same time the state took over more and more duties to educate and raise children disregarding traditional family responsibilities.

Under new buzz-words and catch phrases such as “marriage and career compatibility”, “partnership-life” (replacing “family-life”), “well-being and equal-opportunities for children”, etc., the number of children under 3 years of age in some form of state care country-wide rose from 14% in 2006 to 33% in 2015, and the number of mothers of 2 to 3 year olds in a gainful occupation rose from 42% to 58% in the same period. The place of the family in the traditional Biblical sense as the very original core element of our society has in the past years been eroded step by step and deprived of any significance. Let us pray that we will see a major change in family-oriented policies as the next federal government in Germany is built, with completely new appointments in the ministry for families, women, seniors and young people!

Prayer:

- **For God-fearing personnel to be appointed in the new ministry for families. (Psalm 111:10)**
- **For a complete turn-around in the family-related policies in our land. (2 Chronicles 7:14)**
- **That for the sake of their children mothers will not want to work and will receive support from the state. (Psalm 127:3)** -TF-

A new reformation

The ten year programme of events within the Lutheran Church which started in September 2008 (“Luther-Dekade” in German) and the final year of commemoration of the Reformation come to an end on October 31st, 2017. Countless events, exhibitions and writings will have been dedicated to this anniversary, half of the city of Wittenberg renovated, and Luther will have been disputed, pulled apart, held in somewhat high esteem and celebrated. By the end the numbers of visitors at church conferences and world exhibitions will remain well under expectations and the positive outcome that was anxiously awaited will feel more like a depressive hangover. What will remain from the anniversary of the Reformation?

As the official activity in the past years comes to an end, the faith for a new reformation has grown. Under the title “New Reformation” thousands of young Christians met in June in Prague and prayed in expectation for a reformation that does not divide us but rather unites us in Jesus Christ and brings millions back to Him. We believe that we stand on the threshold of a new reformation that will once again bind the church to the Word of God, as first happened 500 years ago, and from there bring a change in our society and throughout Europe. And that the cloud of witnesses from the reformers and generations before us will stand with us before the throne of God and pray that the spiritual inheritance of the church in Germany will now be restored.

Prayer

- **That on this 500th anniversary the doors will be opened for a new reformation in Germany. (Psalm 24)**
- **Lord, take back the lordship over your church of the Reformation! (Matthew 16:16-19)**

- **For visible unity between the churches, for healing and reconciliation. (John 17:20-23)** -KH-

The German-Israeli Parliamentary Group

The basic function of parliamentary groups in the German Federal Parliament is to maintain mutual contacts with other national parliaments in the world. In the new legislature period, the German-Israeli Parliamentary Group, as all the groups, will be rebuilt from the newly elected members of parliament. In the last legislature period there were about 50 members in the group, representing all parties within the parliament. Membership is voluntary and the parliamentarians are united by their interest in Israel. They deal with general aspects of German-Israeli relations, work to provide clarification on Israeli issues to parliament and the media, and are important contacts for the Jewish community in Germany. As a counterpart in the Israeli Knesset there is an Israeli-German Friendship Group of Israeli parliamentarians.

The work of the German-Israeli Parliamentary Group has particularly caught the attention of the general public, not least because of the dedication of the chairman Volker Beck of the Greens Party, who will no longer sit in the new German parliament. Let us now pray for a Spirit-led composition of parliamentarians in the next German-Israeli Parliamentary Group.

Prayer:

- **Thanks for the friendly connections between the German and Israeli parliaments. (Psalm 133:1)**
- **That the Spirit of God will call dedicated people into this German-Israeli Parliamentary Group and that they will be a true voice for German-Israeli friendship.**
- **For the new chairman to be influential and dedicated. (Psalm 119:30)** -RS-

Keep praying: Relationship between Germany and Turkey

The relationship between Germany and Turkey gets worse day by day. Increasingly German citizens are finding themselves under interrogation, arrest and detention. The arbitrary arrests have led to travel warnings. The German government now takes the position in the European Union that it would be right and proper to break off membership negotiations with Turkey. This however must be a majority decision. At this time there is no majority. The negative influence of the Turkish Islamic Institute for Religion which is controlled from Turkey comes more and more into the picture. *See also: “The Turkish Islamic Institute for Religion (Ditib)” in the prayer letter from November 2016.*

Prayer:

- **For the re-evaluation of the relationship between Germany and Turkey in accordance with God’s plans and purposes. (Proverbs 2:6)** -RS-

Dates for your diary

- 01.10** International Day of Prayer for the Peace of Jerusalem (Robert Stearns - Eagles Wings).
- 31.10** Reformation Day in Germany.

God’s blessings from Rosemarie Stresemann and Team